

CHAPTER 1.3.5.

ZONING AND COMPARTMENTALISATION

(Definition) once adopted, this will move to Chapter 1.1.1.

Biosecurity plan

means a plan that identifies potential pathways for the introduction and spread of *disease* in a *zone* or *compartment*, and describes the measures which are being or will be applied to mitigate the *disease* risks in accordance, when applicable, with the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code*. The plan also describes how these measures are audited to ensure that the risks are regularly re-assessed and the measures adjusted accordingly.

Article 1.3.5.1.

Introduction

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, ‘zoning’ and ‘regionalisation’ have the same meaning.

Given the difficulty of establishing and maintaining a *disease* free status for an entire country, especially for *diseases* the entry of which is difficult to control through measures at national boundaries, there may be benefits to a Member Country~~ies~~ in establishing and maintaining a *subpopulation* with a ~~different~~ distinct *animal health status* within ~~national boundaries~~ its territory. *Subpopulations* may be separated by natural or artificial geographical barriers or, in certain situations, ~~animal industries~~ by the application of appropriate management systems, ~~including biosecurity management~~.

Zoning and compartmentalisation are procedures implemented by a country under the provisions of this chapter with a view to defining *subpopulations* of ~~different~~ distinct *animal health status* within its territory for the purpose of *disease* control and/or *international trade*. Compartmentalisation applies to a *subpopulation* when management practices ~~systems~~ related to biosecurity are the defining factors applied, while zoning applies when a *subpopulation* is defined on a geographical basis. In practice, spatial considerations and good management play important roles in the application of both concepts.

This chapter is to assist OIE Member Countries wishing to establish and maintain different *subpopulations* within their national borders using the principles of compartmentalisation and zoning. These principles should be applied in accordance with the measures recommended in the relevant *disease* chapter(s). ~~It~~ This chapter also outlines a process through which ~~for~~ trading partners ~~to follow in achieving recognition of~~ may recognise such *subpopulations*. ~~These procedures are~~ This process is best implemented by trading partners through establishing parameters and gaining agreement on the necessary measures prior to *disease outbreaks*.

Before trade in *animals* or their products may occur, an *importing country* needs to be satisfied that its *animal health status* will be appropriately protected. In most cases, the import regulations developed will rely in part on judgements made about the effectiveness of sanitary procedures undertaken by the *exporting country*, both at its borders and within its territory.

~~The benefits of~~ As well as contributing to the safety of international trade, zoning and compartmentalisation may ~~include a contribution to assist~~ disease control or eradication within Member Countries, and to the safety of international trade. Zoning may encourage the more efficient use of resources within certain parts of a country ~~to allow trade in certain commodities from that zone in accordance with the Terrestrial Code.~~ and compartmentalisation may allow ~~safe trade due to~~ the functional separation of a *subpopulation* from other domestic or wild animals through biosecurity measures, which a *zone* (through geographical separation) would not achieve. Following a *disease outbreak*, compartmentalisation may be able to take advantage of epidemiological links among subpopulations or common practices relating to biosecurity, despite diverse geographical locations, to facilitate *disease control and/or the resumption of trade.*

Zoning and compartmentalisation cannot be applied to all diseases but separate requirements will be developed for each *disease* for which the application of zoning or compartmentalisation is considered appropriate.

To regain free status following a disease outbreak in a zone or compartment, Member Countries should follow the recommendations in the relevant disease chapter in the Terrestrial Code.

Article 1.3.5.2.

General considerations

The *Veterinary Services* of an *exporting country* which is establishing a *zone* or *compartment* within its territory for *international trade* purposes should clearly define the *subpopulation* in accordance with the ~~measures stipulated~~ recommendations in the relevant chapters in the *Terrestrial Code*, including those on surveillance, and the identification and traceability of live animals. The Veterinary Services of an exporting country ~~and~~ should be able to explain to the *Veterinary Services* of an *importing country* the basis for its claim of a distinct *animal health status* for the *zone* or *compartment* in such terms.

The procedures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* should be appropriate to the particular circumstances, and will depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, environmental factors and applicable biosecurity measures ~~(including movement controls, use of natural and artificial boundaries, commercial management and husbandry practices), and surveillance and monitoring.~~

The authority, organisation and infrastructure of the Veterinary Services, including laboratories, must be clearly documented in accordance with the chapter on the evaluation of Veterinary Services of the Terrestrial Code, to provide confidence in the integrity of the zone or compartment. The final authority of the zone or compartment, for the purposes of domestic and international trade, lies within the Veterinary Administration.

The *exporting country* should be able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation published through official channels, that it has implemented the ~~measures stipulated~~ recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* for establishing and maintaining such a *zone* or *compartment*.

An *importing country* should recognise the existence of this *zone* or *compartment* when the appropriate measures recommended in the *Terrestrial Code* are applied and the *Veterinary Administration* of the *exporting country* certifies that this is the case.

The *exporting country* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment* for *international trade* purposes. These include the human and financial resources, and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry, in the case of a *compartment*) including *disease* surveillance and diagnosis.

Biosecurity and surveillance are essential components of zoning and compartmentalization and the arrangements should be developed through cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services*.

Industry's responsibilities in most cases include the application of biosecurity measures, quality assurance schemes, monitoring the efficacy of the measures, documenting corrective actions, conducting surveillance, rapid reporting and maintenance of records in a readily accessible form.

The *Veterinary Services* should provide movement certification, periodic inspections of facilities, biosecurity measures, records and surveillance procedures. *Veterinary Services* should audit surveillance and reporting and conduct or oversee laboratory diagnostic examinations.

Article 1.3.5.3.

Prerequisite considerations in defining a zone or compartment

~~The *exporting country* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment* for *international trade* purposes. These include the human and financial resources, and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry, in the case of a *compartment*).~~

Article 1.3.5.4.

Principles for defining a zone or compartment

~~In conjunction with the above considerations, the following principles should apply when Member Countries defining a *zone* or a *compartment* should be based on the application of the following principles:~~

1. The extent of a *zone* and its geographical limits should be established by the *Veterinary Administration* on the basis of natural, artificial and/or legal boundaries, and made public through official channels.
2. ~~The requirements regarding factors defining a *compartment*~~ should be established by the *Veterinary Administration* on the basis of relevant criteria such as ~~biosecurity~~ management and husbandry practices related to biosecurity, and made public through official channels.
3. Animals and herds belonging to such *subpopulations* need to be ~~clearly~~ recognisable as such through a clear epidemiological separation from other animals and all things presenting a *disease* risk. For a *zone* or *compartment*, the *Veterinary Administration* ~~must~~ should document in detail the measures taken to ensure the identification of the *subpopulation* and the ~~recognition~~ establishment and maintenance of its *animal health status* through a *biosecurity plan*. The ~~procedures~~ measures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* should be appropriate to the particular circumstances, and will depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, environmental factors, the *animal health status* of animals in adjacent areas, applicable biosecurity measures (including movement controls, use of natural and artificial boundaries, the spatial separation of animals, and commercial management and husbandry practices), and surveillance.

4. The existence of a valid animal traceability system is a prerequisite to assess the integrity of the zone or compartment. Animals within the zone or compartment should be identified in such a way that their history can be audited. Depending on the system of production, identification may be done at the herd, flock lot or individual animal level. All animal movements into and out of the zone or compartment should be well documented, controlled and supervised.
5. For a compartment, the biosecurity plan should describe the partnership between the relevant enterprise/industry and the Veterinary Administration, and their respective responsibilities. It should also describe the routine operating procedures to provide clear evidence that the surveillance conducted, the live animal identification and traceability system, and the management practices are adequate to meet the definition of the compartment. In addition to information on animal movement controls, the plan should include herd or flock production records, feed sources, surveillance results, birth and death records, visitor logbook, morbidity and mortality history, medications, vaccinations, documentation of training and any other criteria necessary for evaluation of risk mitigation. The information required may vary according to the species and disease(s) under consideration. The biosecurity plan should also describe how the measures will be audited to ensure that the risks are regularly re-assessed and the measures adjusted accordingly.
6. ~~Thus defined, the zones and compartments constitute the relevant subpopulations for the application of the recommendations in Part 2 of the Terrestrial Code.~~

Article 1.3.5.5.

Sequence of steps to be taken in ~~defining~~ establishing a zone/compartment and having it recognised for international trade purposes

There is no single sequence of steps which ~~must~~ should be followed in ~~defining~~ establishing a zone or a compartment. The steps that the Veterinary Services of the importing country and the exporting country choose and implement will generally depend on the circumstances existing within ~~a~~ the countries ~~and at its~~ their borders, and their trading history. The recommended steps are:

1. For zoning
 - a) The exporting country identifies a geographical area within its territory, which it considers to contain an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease/specific diseases, based on surveillance ~~and monitoring~~.
 - b) The exporting country ~~identifies~~ describes in the biosecurity plan for the zone the ~~procedures~~ measures which are being, or ~~could will be, employed~~ applied to distinguish such an area epidemiologically from other parts of its territory, in accordance with the ~~measures stipulated~~ recommendations in the Terrestrial Code.
 - c) The exporting country provides the above information ~~above~~ to the importing country, ~~and explains that with an explanation of why~~ the area can be treated as an epidemiologically separated zone for international trade purposes.

- d) The *importing country* determines whether it ~~may~~ accepts such an area as a *zone* for the importation of *animals* and animal products, taking into account:
 - i) an evaluation of the *exporting country's Veterinary Services*;
 - ii) the result of a *risk assessment* based on the information provided by the *exporting country* and its own research;
 - iii) its own animal health situation with respect to the *disease(s)* concerned; and
 - iv) other relevant OIE standards.
- e) The *importing country* notifies the *exporting country* of the result of its determination and the underlying reasons, within a reasonable period of time, being ~~either~~:
 - i) recognition of the *zone*; or
 - ii) request for further information; or
 - iii) rejection of the area as a *zone* for *international trade* purposes.
- f) An attempt should be made to resolve any differences over the definition of the *zone*, either in the interim or finally, by using an agreed mechanism to reach consensus (such as the OIE in-house procedure for settlement of disputes (Article 1.3.1.3.) ~~settlement mechanism~~).
- g) The *Veterinary Administrations of the importing country* and the *exporting country* ~~may~~ should enter into a formal agreement ~~defining~~ recognizing the *zone*.

2. For compartmentalisation

- a) Based on discussions with the relevant enterprise/industry, the *exporting country* identifies within its territory a compartment of one or more *establishments* or other premises owned by an enterprise(s) which operates under a common ~~biosecurity~~ management system practices related to biosecurity, and which ~~it considers~~ contains an identifiable animal *subpopulation* with a distinct animal health status with respect to a specific *disease/specific diseases*; ~~and the exporting country describes how that~~ this status is maintained through a partnership between the relevant enterprise/industry and the *Veterinary Services* of the *exporting country*.
- b) The *exporting country* examines the compartment's 'biosecurity plan management manual' ~~produced by the enterprise/industry for such establishment(s)~~; and confirms through an audit that:
 - i) ~~such establishment(s)~~ the compartment is(are) epidemiologically closed throughout its routine operating procedures as a result of effective implementation of its 'biosecurity plan management manual'; and

- ii) the surveillance and monitoring programme in place is appropriate to verify the ~~free~~ status of such *establishment(s)* with respect to such *disease(s)*.
- c) The *exporting country* ~~identifies~~ describes the ~~such an enterprise to be a free compartment~~, in accordance with the ~~measures stipulated~~ recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code*.
- d) The *exporting country* provides the above information ~~above~~ to the *importing country*, ~~and explains that~~ with an explanation of why such an enterprise can be treated as an epidemiologically separated ~~compartment~~ for international trade purposes.
- e) The *importing country* determines whether it ~~may~~ accepts such an enterprise as a *compartment for the importation of animals and animal products*, taking into account:
 - i) an evaluation of the *exporting country's Veterinary Services*;
 - ii) the result of a *risk assessment* based on the information provided by the *exporting country* and its own research;
 - iii) its own animal health situation with respect to the *disease(s)* concerned; and
 - iv) other relevant OIE standards.
- f) The *importing country* notifies the *exporting country* of the result of its examination and the underlying reasons, within a reasonable period of time, being ~~either~~:
 - i) recognition of the *compartment*; or
 - ii) request for further information; or
 - iii) rejection of such an enterprise as a *compartment* for international trade purposes.
- g) An attempt should be made to resolve any differences over the definition of the *compartment*, either in the interim or finally, by using an agreed mechanism to reach consensus (such as the OIE in-house procedure for settlement of disputes (Article 1.3.1.3.) ~~settlement mechanism~~).
- h) The *Veterinary Administrations of the importing country* and the *exporting country* ~~may~~ should enter into a formal agreement ~~defining~~ recognizing the *compartment*.